

patient how both to avoid the exciting cause and counteract its effects. It is sometimes difficult to convince a man or a boy, who but for his doctor's statement that his urine misbehaves itself under the influence of heat and nitric acid, would believe himself in perfect health, that it is necessary for him to submit to any restraint in his diet or general mode of living. It therefore becomes necessary to explain to him what may be the result of negligence in this matter. The result of my experience is, that the occasional appearance of even a small amount of albumen after food and exercise or exposure to cold, if not traced to its exciting cause, and if the cause be not such as can be avoided or counteracted, will almost certainly, at no distant period, become a persistent albuminuria; and persistent albuminuria leads on sooner or later to fatal degeneration of the kidney. It is true that many years may pass before the renal disease begins to react upon the general health. The most protracted case of the kind that has come under my own observation occurred in a hard-working general practitioner, who, when fifteen years of age, had dropsy after scarlet fever. He recovered from the dropsy, and believed himself to be well. Five years later, he was a medical student; and while he and some of his fellow-students were engaged in testing each other's urine, his was found to be albuminous. The albuminuria continued until his death from uræmia, at the age of forty-five; yet, until within a few months of his death he was in fairly good health and actively engaged in a large practice. Here, then, was an interval of thirty years between the beginning and the end of the fatal malady, yet during the whole of that period, it might have been said of him "heret lateri lethalis arundo." In another case, an interval of nine years elapsed between recovery from acute renal dropsy, but with persistent albuminuria and oily casts, during which the general health appeared to be quite unaffected. Then came an attack of hemiplegia and a series of uræmic symptoms, ending in fatal coma, ten years after the commencement of the disease. A considerable number of cases have come under my observation at a late period of a chronic disease, in which there has been reason to believe that, albuminuria having

persisted after an acute attack long before, there has been an interval of from ten to fifteen years between the commencement and the fatal termination of the malady. Since then, the only probable result of a neglected and persistent albuminuria is a fatal degeneration of the kidney, with the multifarious miseries resulting from uræmic poisoning, it is obviously of the highest importance to impress upon the patient the necessity for a continuous systematic treatment, dietetic, hygienic, and medicinal, adapted to the circumstances of each case. As a general rule, it will be found that, *ceteris paribus*, the earlier the patient is subjected to treatment after the onset of the symptoms, the more speedy and complete is the success; but we sometimes have the satisfaction of witnessing a complete recovery after a very long continued albuminuria. One of the most satisfactory cases of recovery after a long duration of threatening symptoms was that of a very distinguished medical graduate of London, who, when he consulted me in November, 1877, was twenty-six years of age. His urine had been continuously albuminous after food since an attack of scarlet fever in June, 1871. In spite of the anxiety which this symptom had occasioned, his general health had been good, and he had worked hard and obtained the highest honours at the university. I advised him to place his main reliance upon a carefully regulated diet. Under the influence of an exclusive milk-diet for five or six weeks, the albumen had much diminished. He then took a small quantity of solid food; and, after a time, a two-ounce glass of Hunyadi Janos water every morning, which, acting rather freely on the bowels, relieved him of a dull pain before felt in the region of the liver, and still further reduced the amount of albumen. During the month of July, 1878, the albumen disappeared; and for the last eighteen months there has been no recurrence of the symptom. In this case, then, albuminuria of seven years' duration has been completely removed, and I have lately seen the former patient in perfect health. The complete recovery of health after so long a continuance of the symptoms may afford encouragement to those who are engaged in the treatment of these troublesome and anxious cases. On the subject of treatment, I shall have something to say on a future occasion.—*British Medical Journal*.